

# Aquatic Invasive Plants and Animals

Michigan waters are threatened by nonnative aquatic invasive plants and animals such as the zebra mussel, round goby, sea lamprey, Eurasian ruffe, Eurasian watermilfoil, rusty crayfish, and spiny water flea. These species and others are harmful to recreational fishing and do extensive economic and natural resource damage. Anglers should learn to identify nonnative species they may encounter and take precautions to prevent their spread. These actions include:

- Removing all visible aquatic plants and animals from your boat, motor, trailer, and accessory equipment before leaving the access area.
- Draining live wells and all water from boats before leaving the access area.
- Power washing boats and trailers wherever possible.
- Thoroughly drying boats and all equipment for at least 5 days before launching into a different water body.
- Disposing of live bait and aquatic animals in the trash. Do not release live bait into the water and never use live or dead aquatic invasive animals such as round goby or rusty crayfish as bait.

In 2005, several bills were signed into law establishing lists of restricted and prohibited aquatic invasive species and rules and penalties for possession. Please review the Unlawful Activities section of the guide for more information. Natural resource managers are concerned about introduction of new species and have set up an Angler's Monitoring Network to report any discoveries. Anglers should save and report unidentified fish to the nearest DNR Operations Service Center listed on the back cover of this booklet. If you have any questions, contact an Operations Service Center or visit **[www.michigan.gov/deq-anglers-monitoring-network](http://www.michigan.gov/deq-anglers-monitoring-network)**.



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